



# M. E. S. S.

(Mothers Eliminating Secondhand Smoke)

Sponsored by Hold Out the Lifeline: A Mission to Families and  
S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control

Extra!

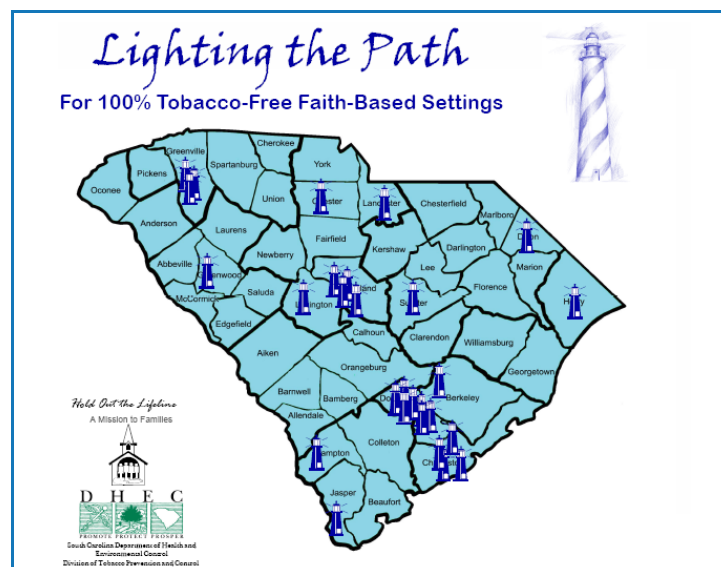
Special "Lighting the Path" Edition

2007

## Churches Adopt Tobacco-free Policies as Part of "Lighting the Path" Campaign

Mothers Eliminating Secondhand Smoke (M.E.S.S.) created a new initiative to showcase all the good work churches throughout South Carolina are doing to promote the health of their congregational members and protect against secondhand smoke exposure.

"Lighting the Path" is a campaign created by Hold Out the Lifeline: A Mission to Families and the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control. This program recognizes churches who adopt 100 percent tobacco-free policies. To take part in the program, churches also must agree to host educational sessions for youth and adults on the dangers of



secondhand smoke.

Since this showcase program began in early 2007, more than 50 churches statewide have been reached, more than 2,000 people have been educated and 900

voluntarily pledged to be smoke-free. Many churches adopted tobacco-free policies and many more have begun the discussion about policy change and the importance of tobacco-free environments.

M.E.S.S. is also working in partnership with the Woman's Baptist Education and Missionary Convention of South Carolina, which includes 1,500 churches and more than 500,000 congregational members. Another new partner for the project is the Disciples of Christ, which will promote M.E.S.S. in its churches statewide.

M.E.S.S. also is being formally evaluated by the S.C. Cancer Disparities Community Network, which is using a community-based participatory research process.

In the pages of this special edition, you will meet a sampling of the churches actively involved in M.E.S.S. and "Lighting the Path." They are committed to making their faith-based environments tobacco-free and healthy.

The pictures (below) were taken during a M.E.S.S. workshop in May at Grace and Truth Christian Center in Columbia. Thirty-eight adults and 12 young people attended the session.



# "Lighting the Path" Spotlight

## GRACE AND TRUTH CHRISTIAN CENTER

**Columbia**—Dr. Michael Gibson presented information about the dangers of secondhand smoke during Grace and Truth Christian Center's M.E.S.S. workshop in May. Pastor Dr. Koger shared scriptures concerning taking care of the body as the Temple of God. The church now has 'no smoking' signs in all rooms.

During Children's Church, there was also a session about the dangers of smoking. Youth drew posters advocating for being smoke-free and toured the church to see all the "no smoking" signs.  
—Submitted by Angela Williams

## SECOND CALVARY MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Heath Springs**—Dr. James Coleman, pastor of Second Calvary, used part of his sermon June 3 to speak about the dangers of smoking. It is not good for physical health or spiritual health. After morning services, everyone met on the church grounds and Dr. Coleman pointed out the new signs that said "no smoking." The church adopted a tobacco-free policy, and tobacco use is prohibited on all church grounds.

The pastor and the Health and Faith Ministry have pledged to provide assistance to help all members, family and friends who smoke, quit. Inserts including information about quitting tobacco use were included in the church bulletin.

—Submitted by Johnnie B. Crawford

## ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

**Columbia**—As a result of a presentation by the American Cancer Society and other sessions on the dangers of secondhand smoke, Zion Baptist Church instituted a smoke-free environment policy.

The Zion Community Foundation sponsored a

workshop in September and presented information about smoking again during its local community association meeting.

The church also has placed appropriate signs communicating the new policy in 16 areas and posted the policy on its bulletin board. Also, Zion Baptist Church members signed pledge cards to show support and to assist with implementing the policy.

—Submitted by Jasper Cureton

## GREATER ST. JAMES AME CHURCH

**Summerville**—Sixty adults and 50 youth learned about M.E.S.S. and the dangers of secondhand smoke during sessions in October. Participants received handouts and completed pledges not to smoke in homes and cars.

—Submitted by Blanch Johnson

## SAINT JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH

**Columbia**—"Are You a Victim?" a program to help young people recognize how invasive secondhand smoke is in their lives, was presented in June.

More than 50 youngsters ages 12 to 18 attended, asked vibrant questions and delivered testimonials. Alzen Smith and Sharon Minniweather, coordinators for Saint John Baptist Church's initiative to eliminate secondhand smoke, delivered the presentation.

Also, 50 adults took part in an education session during Vacation Bible School and learned about the facts of secondhand smoke exposure. Participants voluntarily pledged to not smoke in their homes and vehicles. They also agreed to support Saint John's initiative to eliminate secondhand smoke. Adopting a 100% tobacco-free policy was accepted and will be recommended at the church conference. "No Smoking" signs and educational posters will be

displayed throughout the church buildings and grounds.

—Submitted by Alzen Smith and Sharon Minniweather



## ST. STEPHEN AME CHURCH

**Hardeeville** — Concurrent sessions were held for youth and adults discussing ways to eliminate secondhand smoke exposure. Participants watched a video about making choices and how the media can influence people. Handouts about how smoking affects health were given. A poster was displayed showing various chemicals found in tobacco.

The group interacted with presenters Iris Gooding and Tammy Butler Washington, asked questions and requested more materials.

St. Stephen AME Church adopted a smoke-free policy and displayed Quit for Keeps materials on its health information table.

—Submitted by Martha A. Jenkins

## NORTH ANDERSON BAPTIST CHURCH

**Anderson**— Three presentations were held about M.E.S.S. and Lighting the Path. During the first presentation, youth had an interactive discussion on smoking, tobacco use and secondhand smoke. During the second presentation, "Ciggy," an

oversized cigarette taught children about why he is not their friend.

The third presentation was given to adults and included information about the dangers of tobacco use. Participants also signed smoke-free pledges and received smoke-free vehicle stickers.

—Submitted by Pam Parker

## SOLOMON'S PORCH HOLINESS DELIVERANCE CHURCH

**St. George**— The members of Solomon's Porch held a gathering of 50 adults and 55 youth. The group discussed the consequences of smoking and using tobacco. They also discussed M.E.S.S. and looked at pictures of what smoking can do to the body.

—Submitted by Tula Reeves

## ELEM BAPTIST CHURCH

**Harleyville**— Health Educator Martha Dunlap of DHEC Region 7 gave a presentation on M.E.S.S. during Vacation Bible School in June. A video about the dangers of secondhand smoke was shown. Participants were encouraged to take smoke-free pledges.

On June 15, Elem Missionary Baptist Church adopted a smoke-free policy to advocate and protect children and families from secondhand smoke exposure. No smoking signs have been posted throughout the church.

—Submitted by Virginia Milton, Beverly Pringle and Jerline Williams

## MT. OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

**Chester**—Youth and adults had the opportunity to view the facts about the dangers and health consequences of secondhand smoke during a



# "Lighting the Path" Spotlight

presentation at Vacation Bible School. The theme was "Graduate to Great—The Jesus Way," and the presentation's focus was "Graduate to Freedom from Tobacco Use." Information on tobacco addiction, risk of secondhand smoke exposure, and the harmful effects of tobacco use were the main points. Information from the M.E.S.S. toolkit including websites for additional resources were used in illustrations. The Quit for Keeps handout about the S.C. Tobacco Quitline was distributed.

The presenter for youth created a drawing about the harm tobacco use and secondhand smoke can cause to vital organs.

The church adopted the model tobacco-free policy developed by the Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control at SC DHEC. The church's Board of Trustees posted signs throughout the church.

—Submitted by Elizabeth Thompson

attendees to quit or not to start. She is celebrating her 20th smoke-free year.

Rev. Agnes O. Alexander spoke to the congregation on "Keeping the Temple Clean." Pastor Rev. Henry Young summed up the day's activities by reinforcing key points. Hymns, songs, prayers and scriptures were hand-picked to promote healthy living and offer reinforcement of positive messages.

M.E.S.S. was also included in activities of Vacation Bible School. Pastor Rev. Young signed the Model Tobacco Use Policy for Faith-Based Organizations and gave each congregational member in attendance a copy.

The policy was posted in various places throughout the church. Posters were hung in the vestibule and educational annex, and 125 smoke-free pledge forms were distributed. Fifty-five forms were returned.

—Submitted by Gilbert R. Smalls

could prevent you from being a top athlete. He also told a story about his father, who was a smoker, and passed at 67 while his grandfather, a non-smoker, lived to 104.

Dianne Wilson also gave a presentation in May about secondhand smoke. Following the session, there was a question and answer period. The next session will be on how to stop smoking for good with testimonies from individuals who have successfully quit.

—Submitted by Lucille Sanders

## SPRING HILL AME CHURCH

**Gilbert**—During Vacation Bible School, the adult class presented a skit on secondhand smoke.

The church is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of their congregational members and community. Delores McWilliams, who starred in the skit, is a former smoker who smoked for 20 years but has been smoke-free for more than a decade.

All participants received a packet with information about the dangers of secondhand smoke exposure.

The skit was also performed during a youth class at Vacation Bible School. The participants also talked about peer pressure and how to say no to smoking.

—Submitted by Tethel Strolher, Delores McWilliams and Azalea D.B. Green

## ST. MARK UNITED METHOD

**Orangeburg**—In June, St. Mark United Methodist Church held a session introducing the dangers of tobacco. Adult and youth participants discussed health effects, dangers of secondhand smoke, places becoming smoke-free and how smoking affects young people. The group also talked about how they can prevent smoking and help smokers quit.

—Submitted by Michelle Glover

## CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

**Columbia**—The church's Addiction Education Ministry held a Community Day, where a session on the dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke was presented.

Adults listened to a lecture and participated in a group discussion. They pledged to make and keep their homes and vehicles smoke-free.

The youth seminar focused on a lecture about the risks of smoking. The participants also discussed ways to talk to their parents about the importance of being smoke-free. They also signed smoke-free pledges.

—Submitted by Cherri Rakes

## NEW REVELATION BAPTIST CHURCH

**Ridgeway**—New Revelation Baptist Church held three seminars on secondhand smoke exposure. Rev. Dr. George Gaymon, pastor of the church made a presentation to Blythewood Ministerial Alliance in March. There were 42 attendees.

The second seminar was in later March with the Mighty Voices of Praise Choir, which consists of 25 youth. Church members Mattie Gaymon and Joyce Dean explained that everyone is vulnerable to secondhand smoke.

The third seminar was held during Bible Study and included a presentation by a registered nurse. She explained that secondhand smoke can trigger asthma in children and create other health problems.

—Submitted by Joyce H. Dean



## MT. ZION AME CHURCH

**Charleston**—Mt. Zion AME held several M.E.S.S. activities in June including a prayer breakfast and presentation on the facts about smoking, the harm of secondhand smoke and services to help people quit. A church leader, Mrs. Anna M. Smalls, who smoked for more than 30 years, talked about her experiences and struggles with smoking. She encouraged

## FIRST MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Summerville**—Patricia Roberts, a social worker, and Harry Blake, an Allstate owner and former track star, gave a presentation about secondhand smoke in June.

Mrs. Roberts' presentation was for young people, and she added humor and used pictures to enhance the facts.

Mr. Blake talked about how secondhand smoke exposure

# "Lighting the Path" Spotlight



Information on secondhand smoke was presented in June at St. Mark Baptist Church in Dorchester.

## ST. MARK BAPTIST CHURCH

**Dorchester**—The church has wholeheartedly taken on the smoke-free campaign. Rev. Dr. Kenneth Bailey along with associate pastors Evangelist Phamela Pressley and Rev. Leon Addison have empowered the congregation to increase awareness on topics and issues that the community faces.

During the first educational session, the participants set a goal of becoming more educated on the dangers of secondhand smoke and to implement a smoke-free church environment.

Parishioners were also strongly encouraged to implement this plan in their homes and vehicles.

The second session included discussing disease and health complications due to secondhand smoke. During the third session, children and young adults created "no smoking" signs and were encouraged to share their personal experiences with secondhand smoke.

"As we are in our 171st year of existence, St. Mark Baptist Church is excited and do hereby agree to prohibit tobacco use in or on the grounds of our church founded by our forefathers and foremothers well over 100 years ago," according to a statement in the church's activity report.

—Submitted by Alicia Martino-Crawford

## HOPEWELL BAPTIST CHURCH

**Dalzell**—In the church's overall efforts to eliminate smoking, members will begin on-going activities and prevention strategies to support the benefits of a smoke-free environment.

A session was held, and 350 people learned about the importance of smoke-free environments and how to set goals to improve the quality of a healthy life-style.

—Submitted by Geneva Russ and Beverly Little

## THREE MILE CREEK CHRISTIAN CHURCH

**Ridgeville**—A session was held on M.E.S.S. and secondhand smoke. The group discussed the importance of adopting the Model Tobacco-Free Policy for Faith-Based Settings. Minister Rosemary Simmons-Brown was instrumental in introducing the M.E.S.S. campaign to the Disciples of Christ at the state level.

After the session at Three Mile Creek Christian Church, Dolores Scott was invited to present information about M.E.S.S. to the District 1 Union of the Christian Disciples of Christ.

Minister Sotello Long, regional minister for the Christian Church Disciples of Christ, pledged his support to

M.E.S.S. He said the statewide Christian Disciples of Christ would endorse the Model Tobacco-Free Policy for Faith-Based Settings.

—Submitted by Minister Rosemary Simmons-Brown

## GALILEE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Mayesville**—The members of Galilee Missionary Baptist Church enthusiastically embraced receiving information on secondhand smoke.

Sister Rosetta Mayo presented a seminar on the ill effects of secondhand smoke during the annual Family and Friends Day in April. Members were challenged to sign smoke-free pledge cards.

Response was tremendous, and 125 adults and 60 youth were on hand. Rev. Eugene Myers Jr., First Lady Allberta Myers, ministerial staff, deacons, and trustee boards demonstrated support.

Members of the youth department assisted in posting no smoking signs through the sanctuary. They made appeals for members smoking on the grounds to reconsider their actions. They also took home signs to distribute to extended family members and friends.

The M.E.S.S. site coordinators, Sisters Rosetta W. Mayo Elsia Joseph and want to thank Dr. Debrah Wheeler of the Black River Clinic in Manning for supplemental bulletins.

Galilee Baptist Missionary Church youth will participate in additional activities including essay and poster contests. They will read essays and display posters at the Fall Education Fair/Banquet. Winners in each division will receive gifts and school supplies.

—Submitted by Rosetta W. Mayo and Elsia Joseph

## BETHLEHEM MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Hampton**—The church held two educational sessions in April and May.

The one for adults included topics "Secondhand Smoke Fact Sheet," and "The Smoke Around You: Secondhand Smoke in the Workplace, Public Places and Home." Fifty adults attended.

Sessions for youth ages 2 to 18 years were also given in April and May. Topics were "Secondhand Smoke Fact Sheet" and "Secondhand Smoke is Toxic." Forty eight young people attended.

## M.E.S.S. in the Lowcountry

**Above right:** Congregational members at Greater Bethel AME Church in Hanahan sign in before attending a M.E.S.S. educational session in October.



**Below right:** Attendees at the session smile for a group photo.





# “Lighting the Path” Spotlight



These materials on secondhand smoke a quitting smoking hang at Jerusalem United Methodist Church in Cross.



## JERUSALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**Cross**—During an education session in May at Jerusalem United Methodist Church, several adults testified about how they stopped smoking.

“I am able to walk longer distances,” “I don’t have that nagging cough,” “I feel like a different person,” “I am not short of breath,” and “I can’t stand to smell the smoke” were some of the comments.

On June 8, young adults met to talk about the dangers of smoking. All participants said they are non-smokers. The youth discussed that smoking is not cool but is often glamorized. Peer pressure influences young people to use tobacco products.

The church family is going to continue talking about and praying that all homes, vehicles, workplaces and communities will eliminate the use of tobacco.

The church received overwhelming positive response from many elderly and young adults about how their health improved after they eliminated tobacco use.

The church family is glad to be a participant in the smoke-free program.

—Submitted by Clara Yeadon

## ALLENDALE-HAMPTON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

**Brunson**—The Allendale-Hampton Baptist Association of the S.C. Woman’s Missionary Union included information about M.E.S.S. in its monthly newsletter in March.

—Submitted by Evelyn Blount

## LITTLE ZION AME CHURCH

**Greenwood**— Little Zion AME Church hosted the Kruk for Christ Crusade in July, which featured Mrs. Sara Light, a representative from the Greenwood County Health Department.

Mrs. Light presented a program “50 Things and More One Should Know About Secondhand Smoke and Its Side Effects.”

She presented a session for children and teens and one for adults. The church also created a coloring book for children. It emphasized the importance of not smoking.

—Submitted by Rev. Fred M. Armfield



## BETHEL AME CHURCH

**Conway**— The Official Board of Bethel AME Church approved a tobacco-free policy in June.

The board was addressed twice on the importance of having a policy prohibiting tobacco use on church premises and at church-sponsored events. Information was shared about secondhand smoke and the effects of tobacco use. Tobacco cessation sessions were also provided.

Youth attended several events discussing secondhand smoke and cessation. Through collaborative efforts with the BREATHE Tobacco Coalition, pens, water bottles and bumper stickers were given to youth.

No smoking signs have been posted at the church’s entrances, in the parking lot and inside the building.

## HOPEWELL CME CHURCH

**Estill**—Youth and adults gathered for a workshop about secondhand smoke in June.

Parents learned that exposure to secondhand smoke can make their children sick. The presenter also discussed the health hazards of smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke. Participants pledged not to smoke.

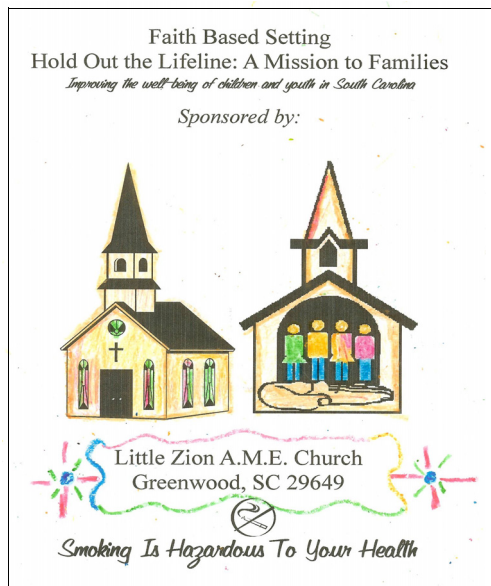
—Submitted by Chinnise Adkins

## WATEREE BAPTIST ASSOC. LOWER DIVISION WOMAN’S AUXILIARY

**Sumter**— A M.E.S.S. presentation was given at the Woman’s Auxiliary Spring Meeting in April at Emmanuel Baptist Church.

Facts about the dangers of secondhand smoke were discussed. The group talked about smoke-free policies and encouraged pastors to adopt them for their churches. Smoke-free pledges for homes and vehicles were also discussed.

—Submitted by Mary Bethea



This coloring book was developed by Little Zion AME Church in Greenwood. It includes information about the dangers of secondhand smoke and M.E.S.S.

It also features games and activities such as a word scramble, a word search and a picture and word connection game.

